Professional Story

My love affair with the visual arts began with repeated visits to the Wadsworth Atheneum of Art in Hartford, Connecticut. At the time, I was a young mother looking for things to do, and the museum offered free admission on Thursday afternoons. It was there that I realized I didn’t just “see” art, I *experienced it.*

As I moved quietly through the museum with my toddler, who was enchanted by the colors and wide open gallery spaces, my senses were enlivened by Hudson River School artists’ pristine panoramic vistas, and the conflicting juxtapositions of forms in Surrealist paintings. I was attending college part time to complete an English degree, but those works of art gracing the galleries (which sometimes drew me in so deeply I wept), influenced me to change my major to Art History, and then progress towards a graduate degree in American Studies.

It was through an experience at the New Britain Museum of American Art in New Britain, Connecticut, that my passion crystalized. In that beautiful space, I found myself seeing deeply *into* the art, seeing the inner lives of the women portrayed in the works. Through the depictions of and by women, I found myself thinking, seeing and speaking in new and daring ways. Female artists were tugging at me, pulling me from my traditional ideas about women and the limitations of domestic life, and into a new life filled with work I love.

That work is to give these artists a voice, and set them in their rightful place in the canon of American art. In a world where history is written by the victors (who are usually male and caucasian), I focus on the art and craft of women. I employ a multi-layered practice that is fun and accessible. I teach, write, speak, produce *Beyond the Paint with Bernadine* podcast and design tours centered on contributions by women in museum and gallery collections. Whether you are an art-lover, feminist, history-nerd, or lifelong learner, my work will take you on a journey into the astonishing inner-lives of women, exposed and ornamented through works of art. I hope you will join me on these adventures.

Degrees:

BA in Art History, Central Connecticut State University

MA in American Studies with a concentration in Museums and Communities; Trinity College, Hartford, CT

New Projects:

I am currently writing a memoir about the impact of the visual arts had and continues to have in my life.